









Mr. Kemble as Hamlet.

H A M L E T,

PRINCE OF DENMARK.

A T R A G E D Y.

Taken from the

M A N A G E R's B O O K,

A T T H E

Theatre-Royal, Drury-Lane.

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L O N D O N :

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M.DCC.LXXXVII.

# Dramatis Personæ. 1787.

*Drury-Lane.*

Hamlet,	-	-	-	-	<i>Mr. Kemble.</i>
King,	-	-	-	-	<i>Mr. Packer.</i>
Ghost,	-	-	-	-	<i>Mr. Bensley.</i>
Horatio,	-	-	-	-	<i>Mr. Farren.</i>
Laertes,	-	-	-	-	<i>Mr. Aicken.</i>
Othrick,	-	-	-	-	<i>Mr. Lamassé.</i>
Polonius,	-	-	-	-	<i>Mr. Baddesley.</i>
Player King,	-	-	-	-	<i>Mr. Chaplin.</i>
Marcellus,	-	-	-	-	<i>Mr. Wrighten.</i>
Bernardo,	-	-	-	-	<i>Mr. Phillimore.</i>
Rosencraus,	-	-	-	-	<i>Mr. R. Palmer.</i>
Guildenstern,	-	-	-	-	<i>Mr. Williams.</i>
Grave-Diggers	-	-	-	-	{ <i>Mr. Parsons and</i> <i>Mr. Burten.</i>
Queen,	-	-	-	-	
Player Queen,	-	-	-	-	<i>Mrs. Hopkins.</i>
Ophelia,	-	-	-	-	<i>Mrs. Booth.</i>
					<i>Mrs. Field.</i>

# Hamlet, Prince of Denmark.

ACT I. SCENE, *Elfinour.*

*A Platform before the Palace.*

*Francisco on his Post, enter to him Bernardo.*

*Bernardo.*

WHO's there? [yourself,

*Fran.* Nay, answer me. Stand, and unfold

*Ber.* Long live the king!

*Fran.* Bernardo!

*Ber.* He.

*Fran.* You come most carefully upon your hour.

*Ber.* 'Tis now struck twelve. Get thee to bed Francisco.

*Fran.* For this relief, much thanks: 'tis bitter cold,  
And I am sick at heart.

*Ber.* Have you had quiet guard?

*Fra.* Not a mouse stirring.

*Ber.* Well, good night,

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,  
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

*Enter Horatio and Marcellus.*

*Fran.* I think I hear them---Stand, ho! Who is there?

*Hor.* Friends to this ground.

*Mar.* And liegemen to the Dane.

*Fran.* Give you good night. [liev'd you?

*Mar.* Oh, farewell, honest soldier! Who hath re-

*Fran.* Bernardo hath my place. Give you good night.

[*Exit Francisco.*

*Mar.* Holla! Bernardo?

*Ber.* Say, what, is Horatio there?

*Hor.* A piece of him.

*Ber.* Welcome, Horatio; welcome, good Marcellus.

*Mar.* What, has this thing appear'd again to-night?

*Ber.* I have seen nothing.

*Mar.* Horatio says, 'tis but our phantasy;

And will not let belief take hold of him,

Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us:

Therefore I have intreated him along

With us to watch the minutes of this night;

That if again this apparition come,

*Horatio*

He may approve our eyes, and speak to it.

*Hor.* 'Twill not appear.

*Ber.* Come let us once again assail your ears,  
That are so terrified against our story.

What we have two nights seen.—

*Hor.* Well, sit we down,  
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

*Ber.* Last night of all,  
When yon same star, that's westward from the pole,  
Had made his course to illume that part of heav'n  
Where now it burns, Marcellus, and myself,  
The bell then beating one——— [again!

*Mar.* Peace, break thee off; look where it comes

*Enter the Ghost.*

*Ber.* In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

*Mar.* Speak to it, Horatio.

*Ber.* Looks it not like the king? Mark it, Horatio.

*Hor.* Most like.—It harrows me with fear and wonder.

*Ber.* It would be spoke to.

*Mar.* Speak to it, Horatio.

*Hor.* What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night,  
Together with that fair and warlike form,  
In which the majesty of buried Denmark  
Did sometime march? By heaven, I charge thee, speak!

*Mar.* It is offended.

*Ber.* See! it stalks away.

*Hor.* Stay; speak. I charge thee, speak.

[Exit Ghost]

*Mar.* 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

*Ber.* How now, Horatio! you tremble and look pale.  
Is not this something more than phantasy?  
What think you of it?

*Hor.* I cou'd not believe,  
Without the sensible and true avouch  
Of mine own eyes.

*Mar.* Is it not like the king?

*Hor.* As thou art to thyself.  
Such was the very armour he had on,  
When he the ambitious Norway combated.

*Mar.* Thus twice before, and just at the same hour,  
With martial stalk, hath he gone by our watch.

*Hor.* In what particular thought to work, I know not,  
But, in the gross and scope of my opinion,  
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

\* Before my God I might not  
this Believe.



*Mar.* Pray, tell me he that knows,  
Why this same strict and most observant watch  
So nightly toils the subjects of the land,  
And makes the night joint-labourer with the day?  
Who is't that can inform me?

*Hor.* That can I;  
Our last king,  
Whose image but even now appear'd to us,  
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,  
Dar'd to the combat in which our valiant Hamlet  
Did slay this Fortinbras, who by a seal'd compact,  
Well ratified by law and heraldry,  
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands,  
Which he stood feis'd off, to the conqueror;  
Now, Sir, young Fortinbras,  
Of unimproved mettle hot and full,  
Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,  
Shark'd up a list of landless resolute,  
To recover those foresaid lands,  
So by his father lost: and this, I take it,  
Is the main motive of our preparations.

*Ber.* I think it be no other, but even so.

*Hor:* *Enter Ghost again.*

But soft; behold! lo, where it comes again!  
I'll cross it, though it blast me.—Stay, illusion!

*[Spreading his Arms.]*

If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,  
Speak to me,  
If there be any good thing to be done,  
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,  
Speak to me.

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,  
Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,  
Oh speak!—

Or, if thou hast uphoarded in thy life  
Extorted treasure in the womb of ~~earth~~, *Earth*  
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,

*[Cock crows.]*

Speak of it. Stay, and speak—Stop it, Marcellus.—

*Mar.* 'Tis gone!

*[Exit Ghost.]*

We do it wrong, being so majestic,  
To offer it the shew of violence;  
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,

And our vain blows, malicious mockery

*Ber.* It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

*Hor.* And then it started like a guilty thing  
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,  
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,  
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat  
Awake the god of day; and, at his warning,  
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,  
The extravagant and erring spirit hies  
To his confine.

*Hor.* But look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,  
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill.  
Break we our watch up; and, by my advice,  
Let us impart what we have seen to night  
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,  
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *a Room of State.*

*The King, Queen, Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes.*

*A flourish.*

*King.* Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death  
The memory be green; and that it us befitted  
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom  
To be contracted in one brow of woe:  
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,  
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,  
Together with remembrance of ourselves.  
Therefore, our sometime sister, now our queen,  
The imperial jointress of this warlike state,  
Have we, as 'twere, with a defeated joy,  
Taken to wife.—Nor have we herein barr'd  
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone  
With this affair along.  
But now, Laertes, what's the news with you?  
You told us of some suit. What is't, Laertes?

*Laer.* My dear lord,  
Your leave and favour to return to France;  
From whence, though willingly I came to Denmark,  
To shew my duty in your coronation;  
Yet now I must confess, that duty done,  
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France,  
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon. [*Polonius?*]

*King.* Have you your father's leave? What say's Polonius?

*Pol.* He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave,

By labour some petition ; and, at last,  
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent :  
I do beseech you give him leave to go.

*King.* Take thy fair hour, Laertes ; time be thine,  
And thy best graces spend it at thy will.—

But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son—

*Ham.* A little more than kin, and less than kind.

[*Aside.*

*King.* —How is it, that the clouds still hang on you ?

*Ham.* Not so, my lord, I am too much i'the sun.

*Queen.* Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,  
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

Do not for ever, with thy ~~vald~~ lids, *veiled*

Seek for thy noble father in the dust :

'Thou know'st, 'tis common ; all, that live, must die ;

Passing through nature to eternity.

*Ham.* Ay, Madam, it is common.

*Queen.* If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee ?

*Ham.* Seems, Madam ! nay, it is ; I know not seems.

'Tis not alone my inky coat, good mother,

Nor customary suits of solemn black,

Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,

No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,

Nor the dejected 'haviour of the visage,

Together with all forms, modes, shews of grief,

That can denote me truly.—These, indeed, seem,

For they are actions that a man might play :

But I have that within, that passeth shew ;

These, but the trappings and the suits of woe. [*Hamlet,*

*King.* 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature,

To give these mourning duties to your father :

But, you must know, your father lost a father ;

That father ~~lost~~, lost his ; and the survivor bound

In filial obligation, for some term,

To do obsequious sorrow. But to ~~perforce~~ *pervere*

In obstinate condolment, is a course

Of impious stubbornness. ——"This must be so."

We pray you, throw to earth

This unavailing woe ; and think of us

As of a father : for, let the world take note,

You are the most immediate to our throne ;

Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

*Queen.* Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet;  
I pray thee, stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.

*Ham.* I shall in all my best obey you, Madam.

*King.* Why, 'tis a loving, and a fair reply;  
Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come;  
This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet  
Sits smiling to my heart, in grace whereof  
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to day,  
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,  
Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away. [*Exeunt.*  
*Monet Hamlet.*

*Ham.* Oh, that this too, too solid flesh wou'd melt,  
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew!  
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd  
His cannon 'gainst self slaughter! O God! O God!  
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable  
Seem to me all the uses of this world!  
Fie on't! oh fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,  
'That grows to feed; things rank, and gross in nature,  
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!  
But two months dead!—nay, not so much; not two:  
So excellent a king, that was, to this,  
Hyperion to a satyr: so loving to my mother,  
'That he might not let e'en the winds of heaven  
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!  
Must I remember?—Why, she would hang on him,  
As if increase of appetite had grown  
By what it fed on: and yet, within a month—  
Let me not think on't—Frailty, thy name is woman!  
A little month; or ere those shoes were old,  
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,  
Like Niobe, all tears:—Why she, even she,  
O heaven! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,  
Would have mourn'd longer—married with my uncle,  
My father's brother; but no more like my father,  
Than I to Hercules.

It is not, nor can it come to good;  
But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue!

*Enter Horatio, Bernardo, and Marcellus.*

*Hor.* Hail to your lordship!

*Ham.* I am glad to see you well.

*Horatio,*—or I do forget myself?

*Hor.* The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

*Ham.* Sir, my good friend, I'll change that name with you.

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?  
Marcellus?

*Mar.* My good lord——

*Ham.* I am very glad to see you; good even, Sir.

—But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

*Hor.* A truant disposition, good my lord.

*Ham.* I would not hear your enemy say so;

Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,

To make it truster of your own report

Against yourself. I know, you are no truant.

But what is your affair in Elsmour?

We'll teach you to drink deep, ere you depart.

*Hor.* My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

*Ham.* I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow student;  
I think, 't was to see my mother's wedding.

*Hor.* Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.

*Ham.* Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral bak'd meats  
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

'Would I had met my direst foe in heaven,

Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio! ——

My father——methinks, I see my father.

*Hor.* Oh where, my lord?

*Ham.* In my mind's eye, Horatio.

*Hor.* I saw him once; he was a goodly king.

*Ham.* He was a man, take him for all in all,

I shall not look upon his like again.

*Hor.* My lord, I think, I saw him yesternight.

*Ham.* Saw! who? ——

*Hor.* My lord, the king your father.

*Ham.* The king my father!

*Hor.* ~~Defer your~~ admiration for a while,

With an attentive ear, 'till I deliver,

Upon the witness of these gentlemen,

This wonder to you.

*Ham.* Pray let me hear.

*Hor.* Two nights together had these gentlemen  
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,  
In the dead waste and middle of the night,  
Been thus accouter'd. A figure like your father,  
Arm'd at all points exactly, cap-a-pe,  
Appears before them, and with solemn march  
Goes slow and stately by them; thrice he walk'd,

B 3

+ Season your admiration.

Within their rapier's length ; whilst they, distill'd  
 Almost to jelly with the act of fear,  
 Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me  
 In dreadful secrecy impart they did ;  
 And I with them, the third night, kept the watch :  
 Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,  
 Form of the thing, each word made true and good,  
 The apparition comes.

*Ham.* But where was this ?

*Mar.* My lord, upon the platform, where we watch'd.

*Ham.* Did you not speak to it ?

*Hor.* My lord, I did ;

But answer made it none ; yet once, methought,  
 It lifted up its head, and did address  
 Itself to motion, like as it would speak :  
 But, even then, the morning cock crew loud ;  
 And at the found it shrunk in haste away,  
 And vanish'd from our sight.

*Ham.* 'Tis very strange.

*Hor.* As I do live, my honour'd lord 'tis true ;  
 And we did think it then our duty  
 To let you know of it.

*Ham.* Indeed, indeed, Sirs, but this troubles me.  
 Hold you the watch to-night ?

*Both.* We do, my lord.

*Ham.* Arm'd, say you ?

*Both.* Arm'd, my lord.

*Ham.* From top to toe ?

*Both.* My lord, from head to foot.

*Ham.* Then saw you not his face ?

*Hor.* Oh, yes, my lord, he wore his beaver up.

*Ham.* What, look'd he frowningly ?

*Hor.* A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

*Ham.* Pale, or red ?

*Hor.* Nay, very pale.

*Ham.* And fix'd his eyes upon you ?

*Hor.* Most constantly.

*Ham.* I would I had been there.

*Hor.* It would have much amaz'd you.

*Ham.* Very like, very like : staid it long ? [dread.

*Hor.* While one with mod'rate haste might tell a hun-

*Both.* Longer, longer.

*Hor.* Not when I saw it,

*Ham.* His beard was grissly.

*Hor.* It was, as I have seen it in his life,  
A fable silver'd.

*Ham.* I'll watch to-night; perchance, twill walk again.

*Hor.* I warrant you, it will.

*Ham.* If it assume my noble father's person,  
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,  
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,  
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,  
Let it be ~~triple~~ in your silence still: *tenable*  
And whatsoever else shall hap to night,  
Give it an understanding, but no tongue;  
I will requite your loves. So fare ye well.  
Upon the plat form, 'twixt eleven and twelve  
I'll visit you.

*All.* Our duty to your honour. [Exeunt.]

*Ham.* Your loves, as mine to you. Farewel.  
My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;  
I doubt some foul play. Would the night were come!  
'Till then, sit still, my soul. Foul deeds will rise,  
(Though all the earth o'erwhelm them) to men's eyes.  
[Exit.]

SCENE, *an Apartment in Polonius's House.*

*Enter Laertes and Ophelia.*

*Laer.* My necessities are embark'd; farewell;  
And, sister, as the winds permit,  
Let me hear from you.

*Oph.* Do you doubt that?

*Laer.* For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,  
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood;  
A violet in the youth of primy nature;  
Forward, not permanent; sweet, not lasting;  
The perfume, and suppliance of a minute;  
No more.

*Oph.* No more but so?

*Laer.* Think it no more:  
He may not, as inferior persons do,  
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends  
The sanity and health of the whole state;  
Then weigh, what loss your honour may sustain,  
If with too credulous ear you hear his passion;  
Fear it, Ophelia; fear it, my dear sister;  
The charest maid is prodigal enough  
If she unmask her beauty to the moon.

*Oph.* I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,

About my heart. But, good my brother,  
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,  
Shew me the steep and thorny way to heaven;  
Whilſt, like a careless libertine,  
Himſelf the primroſe-path of dalliance treads.

*Laer.* Oh, fear me not.

I may too long.—But here my father comes.

*Enter Polonius.*

*Pol.* Yet here, Laertes! abroad, abroad, for ſhame;  
The wind ſits in the ſhoulder of your ſail.

*Laer.* Moſt humbly do I take my leave, my lord.  
Farewel, Ophelia; and remember well  
What I have ſaid to you.

*Oph.* 'Tis in my mem'ry lock'd,  
And you yourſelf ſhall keep the key of it.

*Laer.* Farewel. *[Exit Laertes.]*

*Pol.* What is't, Ophelia, he hath ſaid to you?

*Oph.* So pleaſe you, ſomething touching Hamlet.

*Pol.* Marry, well bethought:  
'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late  
Given private time to you; and you yourſelf  
Have of your audience been moſt free and bounteous.  
If it be ſo, (as ſo 'tis put on me,  
And that in way of caution) I muſt tell you,  
You do not underſtand yourſelf ſo clearly,  
As it behoves my daughter, and your honour.  
What is between you? Give me up the truth.

*Oph.* He hath, my lord, of late, made many tenders  
Of his affection to me.

*Pol.* Affection! puh! you ſpeak like a green girl,  
Unſifted in ſuch perilous circumſtance.  
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

*Oph.* I do not know, my lord, what I ſhould think.

*Pol.* Marry, I'll teach you. Think yourſelf a baby,  
That you have ta'en theſe tenders for true ~~may~~ *pay*,  
Which are not ſterling. Tender yourſelf more dearly,  
Or you'll tender me a fool.

*Oph.* My lord, he hath importun'd me with love,  
In honourable faſhion.

*Pol.* Ay, faſhion you may call it: go to, go to.

*Oph.* And hath given countenance to his ſpeech, my  
lord,

With almoſt all the holy vows of heaven.

*Pol.* Ay, ſprings to catch woodcocks. I do know,



When the blood runs, how prodigal the soul  
Lends the tongue vows.

This is for all.

I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,  
Have you so slander any moment's leisure,  
As to give words or talk with the lord Hamlet.

Look to't, I charge you. Come your ways.

*Opb.* I shall obey, my lord. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E, *a Platform.*

*Enter Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus.*

*Ham.* The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

*Hor.* It is a nipping and an eager air.

*Ham.* What hour now?

*Hor.* I think, it lacks of twelve.

*Mar.* No, it is struck.

*Hor.* Indeed! I heard it not. It then draws near  
the season,

Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[*Noise of trumpets within.*]

What does this mean, my lord?

*Ham.* The king doth wake to-night, and takes his  
rouse,

Keeps wassel, and the swaggering up-spring reels;  
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,  
The kettle-drum, and trumpet, thus bray out  
The triumph of his pledge.

*Hor.* Is it a custom?

*Ham.* Ay, marry, is't:

But, to my mind—though I am native here,  
And to the manner born—it is a custom  
More honour'd in the breach, than the observance.

*Enter Ghost.*

*Hor.* Look, my lord, it comes!

*Ham.* Angels and ministers of grace defend us!  
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,  
Bring with thee airs from heav'n, or blasts from hell,  
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,  
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,  
That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee Hamlet,  
King, father, royal Dane: oh! answer me;  
Let me not burst in ignorance! but tell,  
Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,  
Have burst their cerements? Why the sepulchre,  
Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,

Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,  
 'To cast thee up again? What may this mean——  
 That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,  
 Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,  
 Making night hideous; and we fools of nature,  
 So horribly to shake our disposition  
 With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?  
 Say, why is this, Wherefore? What shou'd we do?

*Hor.* It beckons you to go away with it,  
 As if it some impartment did desire  
 To you alone.

*Mar.* Look, with what courteous action  
 It waves you to a more removed ground:  
 But do not go with it.

*Hor.* No, by no means.

*Ham.* It will not speak; then I will follow it.

*Hor.* Do not, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, what should be the fear?  
 I do not set my life at a pin's fee:  
 And, for my soul, what can it do to that——  
 Being a thing immortal as itself?  
 It waves me forth again.—I'll follow it——

*Hor.* What, if it tempt you t'ward the flood, my lord?  
 Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,  
 And there assume some other horrible form,  
 And draw you into madness?

*Ham.* It waves me still.—Go on, I'll follow thee.

*Mar.* You shall not go, my lord.

*Ham.* Hold off your hands.

*Mar.* Be rul'd, you shall not go.

*Ham.* My fate cries out,  
 And makes each petty artery in this body  
 As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.—  
 Still am I call'd. Unhand me, gentlemen—

[*Breaking from them.*  
 By heav'n, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me:  
 I say, away:—Go on, I'll follow thee.—

[*Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet.*

SCENE, a more remote Part of the Platform.

*Re-enter Ghost and Hamlet.*

*Ham.* Where wilt thou lead me? Speak, I'll go no  
 farther.

*Ghost.* Mark me.

*Ham.* I will.

*Ghost.* My hour is almost come,  
When I to sulph'rous and tormenting flames  
Must render up myself.

*Ham.* Alas, poor ghost!

*Ghost.* Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing  
To what I shall unfold.

*Ham.* Speak, I am bound to hear.

*Ghost.* So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

*Ham.* What?

*Ghost.* I am thy father's spirit :  
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,  
And, for the day, confin'd to fast in fires,  
'Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,  
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid  
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,  
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word  
Would harrow up thy soul ; freeze thy young blood ;  
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres ;  
Thy knotted and combined locks to part.  
And each particular hair to stand on end  
Likes quills upon the fretful porcupine :  
But this eternal blazon must not be  
To ears of flesh and blood.—Lift, lift, oh lift!—  
If thou didst ever thy dear father love ———

*Ham.* O heaven!

*Ghost.* Revenge his foul and most unnat'ral murder.

*Ham.* Murder!

*Ghost.* Murder most foul, as in the best it is ;  
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

*Ham.* Haste me to know it ; that I, with wings as swift  
As meditation or the thoughts of love,  
May sweep to my revenge.

*Ghost.* I find thee apt ;  
Now, Hamlet, hear :  
'Tis given out, that, sleeping in my orchard,  
A serpent stung me : so the whole ear of Denmark  
Is by a forged process of my death  
Rankly abus'd : but know, thou noble youth,  
The serpent that did sting thy father's life,  
Now wears his crown.

*Ham.* Oh, my prophetic soul ! my uncle !

*Ghost.* Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,  
Won to his shameful lust  
The will of my most seeming virtuous queen.  
Oh, Hamlet, what a falling off was there !

From me, whose love was of that dignity,  
That it went hand in hand even with the vow  
I made to her in marriage; and to decline  
Upon a wretch, whose nat'ral gifts were poor,  
To those of mine!

But, soft! methinks, I scent the morning air—  
Brief let me be—Sleeping within mine orchard,  
My custom always of the afternoon,  
Upon my secret hour thy uncle stole,  
With juice of curst hebenon in a vial,  
And in the porches of mine ears did pour  
The leperous distilment; whose effect  
Holds such an enmity with blood of man,  
That, swift as quicksilver, it courses through  
The natural gates and alleys of the body;  
Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,  
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd:  
Cut off, even in the blossoms of my sin,  
Unhousel'd, unanointed, unaneal'd:  
No reckoning made, but sent to my account,  
With all my imperfections on my head.

*Ham.* Oh, horrible! oh horrible! most horrible!

*Ghost.* If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;  
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be  
A couch of luxury and damned incest.  
But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act,  
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive  
Against thy mother aught; leave her to heav'n,  
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,  
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!  
The glow-worm shews the morning to be near,  
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire.  
Farewel! remember me.

[*Sinks.*]

*Ham.* Oh, hold my heart,  
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,  
But bear me stiffly up! Remember thee!  
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat  
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!  
Yea, from the table of my memory  
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records;  
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,  
That youth and observation copied there;  
And thy commandment all alone shall live  
Within the book and volume of my brain,

Unmix'd with baser matter : yes, by heaven.  
 O most pernicious woman !  
 O villain, villain, smiling damned villain !  
 My tables,—meet it is, I set it down,  
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain :  
 At least, I'm *sure*, it may be so in Denmark. [*Writing.*]  
 So, uncle, there you are : now to my word ;  
 It is ; farewell ; remember me.  
 I have ~~worn~~ it—— *Sworn*

*Enter Horatio and Marcellus.*

*Hor.* My lord, my lord——

*Mar.* Lord Hamlet——

*Hor.* Heaven secure him !

*Ham.* So be it.

*Mar.* Illo, ho, ho, ho, my lord !

*Ham.* Hillo, ho, ho, boy ! Come, bird, come.

*Mar.* How is't, my noble lord ?

*Hor.* What news, my lord ?

*Ham.* *Oh*, wonderful !

*Hor.* Good, my lord, tell it.

*Ham.* No : you'll reveal it.

*Hor.* Not I, my lord, by heaven.

*Mar.* Not I, my lord.

*Ham.* How say you then ? Wou'd heart of man once  
 think it ?

But you'll be secret——

*Both.* Ay, by heav'n, my lord.

*Ham.* There's ne'er a villain, dwelling in all Denmark,  
 But he's an arrant knave.

*Hor.* There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the  
 grave,

To tell us this.

*Ham.* Why right ; you are i' the right ;  
 And so without more circumstance at all,  
 I hold it fit, that we shake hands and part :  
 You, as your business and desire shall point you,—  
 For ev'ry man has but'nese and desire,  
 Such as it is ;—and, for my own poor part,  
 I will go pray.

*Hor.* These are but wild and windy words, my lord.

*Ham.* I am sorry they offend you, heartily ;  
 'Faith, heartily.

*Hor.* There's no offence, my lord.

*Ham.* Yes, by St. Patrick, but there is, *Horatio*,  
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,  
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you :  
For your desire to know what is between us,  
O'er-master it as you may. And now, good friends,  
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,  
Give me one poor request.

*Hor.* What is't, my lord?

*Ham.* Never make known what you have seen to night.

*Both.* My lord, we will not.

*Ham.* Nay, but swear it.

*Hor.* In faith, my lord, not I.

*Mar.* Nor I, my lord, in faith.

*Ham.* Upon my sword.

*Hor.* Propose the oath, my lord.

*Ham.* Never to speak of this that you have seen.

Swear by my sword.

*Ghost.* Swear.

*Hor.* O day and night, but this is wond'rous strange!

*Ham.* And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.  
There are more things in heav'n and earth, *Horatio*,  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy. But come,  
Here, as before, never (to help you mercy !)  
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,  
As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet  
To put an antic disposition on,  
That you, at such time seeing me, never shall  
{ With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,  
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,  
As well, well—we know ; or, we could, and if we  
would ;—

Or, if we list to speak ;—or, there be, an if there might ;  
Or such ambiguous giving out) denote  
That you know aught of me : this do you swear,  
So grace and mercy at your most need help you !  
Swear.

*Ghost beneath.* Swear.

*Ham.* Rest, rest, perturbed spirit !—So, gentlemen,  
With all my love do I commend me to you :  
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is  
May do, to express his love and friendship to you,  
Shall never fail. Let us go in together,  
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.  
The time is out of joint ; oh, cursed spight !  
That ever I was born to set it right !

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE, *an Apartment in Polonius's House.*

*Enter Polonius and Ophelia.*

*Pol.* **H**OW now, Ophelia! what's the matter?  
*Oph.* Alas, my lord, I have been so af-  
frighted!

*Pol.* With what, in the name of heaven?

*Oph.* My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,  
Prince Hamlet—with his doublet all unbrac'd,  
Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other,  
He comes before me.

*Pol.* Mad for thy love?

*Oph.* My lord, I do not know;  
But truly, I do fear it.

*Pol.* What said he?

*Oph.* He took me by the wrist, and held me hard;  
Then goes he to the length of all his arm;  
And, with his other hand, thus o'er his brow,  
He falls to such perusal of my face,  
As he would draw it.

That done he lets me go,  
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,  
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;  
For out o' doors he went without their helps,  
And, to the last, bended their light on me.

*Pol.* Come, go with me; I will go seek the king.  
This is the very ecstasy of love.

Have you giv'n him any hard words of late?

*Oph.* No, my good lord; but, as you did command,  
I did repel his letters, and deny'd  
His access to me.

*Pol.* That hath made him mad.

Come, go with me to th' king.

This must be known; which, being kept close, might  
move

More grief to hide, than hate to utter, love.

Come.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *The Palace.*

*Enter King, Queen, Rosencraus, Guildenstern,  
and Attendants.*

*King.* Welcome, dear Rosencraus, and Guildenstern!  
Moreover that we much did long to see you,  
The need, we have to use you, did provoke  
Our hasty sending. Something you have heard

Of Hamlet's transformation;  
 What it should be,  
 More than his father's death,  
 I cannot dream of. I entreat you both,  
 That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court  
 Some little time: so by your companies  
 To draw him on to pleasures; and to gather,  
 [Whether ought, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,]  
 That lies within our remedy.

*Queen.* Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you;  
 And, sure I am, two men there are not living,  
 To whom he more adheres. If it will please you,  
 So to employ your time with us awhile,  
 Your visitation shall receive such thanks  
 As fits a king's remembrance.

*Ros.* Both your majesties  
 Might, by the sov'reign power you have of us,  
 Put your dread pleasures more into command  
 Than to entreaty.

*Guil.* But we both obey,  
 And here give up ourselves, in the full bent,  
 To lay our service freely at your feet.

*King.* Thanks, Rosencraus, and gentle Guildenstern.

*Queen.* I do beseech you, instantly to visit  
 My too much changed son.—Go, some of you,  
 And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

*Enter Polonius.*

*Pol.* Now do I think (or else this brain of mine  
 Hunts not the trail of policy so sure  
 As I have us'd to do) that I have found  
 The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

*King.* Oh, speak of that, that I do long to hear.

*Pol.* My liege, and madam, to expostulate  
 What majesty should be, what duty is,  
 Why day is day, night night, and time is time,  
 Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.  
 Therefore—since brevity's the soul of wit,  
 And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,—  
 I will be brief, your noble son is mad;  
 Mad call I it: for, to define true madness,  
 What is't, but to be nothing else but mad:  
 But let that go. ———

*Queen.* More matter, with less art.

*Pol.* Madam, I swear, I use no art at all. ———



That he is mad, 'tis true ; 'tis true, 'tis pity,  
 And pity 'tis, 'tis true : a foolish figure,  
 But farewell it, for I will use no art.  
 Mad let us grant him then ; and now remains  
 That we find out the cause of this effect ;  
 Or, rather say, the cause of this defect ;  
 For this effect, defective, comes by cause :  
 Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.

I have a daughter ; have, whilst she is mine ;  
 Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,  
 Hath giv'n me this. — Now gather, and surmise.

*To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified  
 Ophelia. — That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase : beauti-  
 fied is a vile phrase ; but you shall hear — These to her  
 excellent white bosom, these, &c. —*

*Queen.* Came this from Hamlet to her ?

*Pol.* Good Madam, stay awhile ; I will be faithful. —  
*Doubt thou, the stars are fire,* [Reading.  
*Doubt, that the sun doth move,*  
*Doubt truth to be a liar,*  
*But never doubt, I love.*

*Ob, dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers ; I have not art  
 to reckon my groans : but that I love thee best, oh most best,  
 believe it. Adieu.*

*Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst  
 this machine is to him, Hamlet.*

This, in obedience, hath my daughter shewn me,  
 And, more above, hath his solicitings,  
 As they fell out by time, by means and place,  
 All given to mine ear.

*King.* But how hath she receiv'd his love ?

*Pol.* What do you think of me ?

*King.* As of a man faithful and honourable.

*Pol.* I would fain prove so. But what might you think,  
 Or my dear majesty your queen here, think  
 If I had play'd the desk or table-book ;  
 Or giv'n my heart a working, mute and dumb,  
 Or lock'd upon this love with idle sight ?  
 What might you think ? No, I went round to work,  
 And my young mistress thus I did bespeak ;  
 Lord Hamlet is a prince — out of thy sphere,  
 This must not be : and then, I precepts gave her,  
 That she should lock herself from his resort,

Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.  
Which done she took the fruits of my advice !  
And he repulsed, (a short tale to make)  
Fell into a sadness ; then into a fast ;  
Thence to a watch ; thence into a weakness ;  
Thence to a lightness ; and, by this declension,  
Into the madness wherein now he raves,  
And all we wail for.

*King.* Do you think, 'tis this ?

*Queen.* It may be, very likely.

*Pol.* Hail there been such a time (I'd fain know that)  
That I have positively said, 'tis so,  
When it prov'd otherwise ?

*King.* Not that I know.

*Pol.* Take this from this, if this be otherwise.

[*Pointing to his head and shoulder.*]

If circumstances lead me, I will find  
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed  
Within the center.

*King.* How may we try it further ?

*Pol.* You know, sometime, he walks ~~four~~ <sup>for</sup> hours to-  
gether,  
Here in the lobby.

*Queen.* So he does, indeed.

*Pol.* At such a time I'll lose my daughter to him :  
So please your majesty to hide yourself  
Behind the arras then ;  
Mark the encounter : if he love her not,  
And be not from his reason fall'n thereon,  
Let me be no assisstant for a state,  
But keep a farm, and casters.

*King.* We will try it.

*Enter Hamlet reading.*

*Queen.* But look, where, sadly the poor wretch comes  
reading.

*Pol.* Away, I do beseech you, both away :  
I'll board him presently. [*Exeunt King and Queen.*]  
Oh, give me leave.—How does my good lord Hamlet ?

*Ham.* Excellent well.

*Pol.* Do you know me, my lord ?

*Ham.* Excellent well ; you are a fishmonger.

*Pol.* Not I, my lord ?

*Ham.* Then I would you were so honest a man.

*Pol.* Honest, my lord ?

*Ham.* Ay, Sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man pick'd out of ten thousand.

*Pol.* That's very true, my lord.

*Ham.* For if the sun breeds maggots in a dead dog, Being a god, kissing carrion——Have you a daughter?

*Pol.* I have, my lord.

*Ham.* Let her not walk i' the sun; conception is a blessing, but not as your daughter may conceive. Friend, look to't.

*Pol.* How say you by that? [*Aside.*] Still harping on my daughter:——

Yet he knew me not at first;——he said, I was a fish-monger.——

He is far gone, far gone; and, truly, in my youth, I suffer'd much extremity for love;

Very near this.——I'll speak to him again.

——What do you read, my lord?

*Ham.* Words, words, words!

*Pol.* What is the matter, my lord?

*Ham.* Between whom?

*Pol.* I mean the matter that you read, my lord?

*Ham.* S'anders, Sir: for the satirical slave says here, that old men have grey beards; that their faces are wrinkled; their eyes purging thick amber, and plum-tree gum; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit; together with most weak hams. All which, Sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for yourself, Sir, shall be as old as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward.

*Pol.* Though this be madness, yet there's method in't. [*Aside.*]

Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

*Ham.* Into my grave?——

*Pol.* Indeed, that is out o' the air;——

How pregnant his replies are!

A bappiness that often madness hits on.

My lord, I take my leave.

*Ham.* You cannot, Sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal, except my life.

*Pol.* Fare you well, my lord.

*Ham.* These tedious old fools!

*Enter Rosencraus and Guildenstern.*

*Pol.* You go to seek lord Hamlet; there he is. [*Exit.*]

*Ros.* Save you, Sir!

*Guild.* My honour'd lord!

*Ros.* My dear lord!

*Ham.* My excellent good friends! How dost thou?  
Guildenstern?

Oh, Rosencraus! Good lads, how do ye both?

What news?

*Ros.* None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

*Ham.* Then is doomsday near: sure your news is not true. But in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

*Ros.* To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

*Ham.* Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me: come, come; nay speak.

*Ham.* Any thing—but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks which your modesties have not craft enough to colour. I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

*Ros.* To what end, my lord?

*Guild.* What should we say, my lord?

*Ham.* That you must teach me. But let me conjure you by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what moie dear a better proposer could charge you withal; be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for or no?

*Ros.* What say you?

[To Guilden.

*Ham.* Nay, then I have an eye of you: if you love me, hold not off.

*Guild.* My lord, we were sent for.

*Ham.* I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late (but wherefore I know not) lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me, than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving how express and admirable! in

action how like an angel ! in apprehension how like a god ! the beauty of the world ! the paragon of animals ! And yet to me, what is this quintessence of dull ? Man delights not me—nor woman neither ; though by your smiling you seem to say so.

*Ros.* My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

*Ham.* Why did you laugh when I said man delights not me ?

*Ros.* To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you ; we met them on the way, and hither are they coming to offer you service.

*Ham.* He that plays the king shall be welcome ; his majesty shall have tribute of me : the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target ; the lover shall not sigh gratis ; the humorous man shall end his part in peace ; and the lady shall speak her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't. What players are they ?

*Ros.* Even those you were wont to take delight in, the tragedians of this city.

*Ham.* How chances it they travel ? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city ? are they so followed ?

*Ros.* No, indeed, they are not.

*Ham.* It is not very strange ; for mine uncle is king of Denmark ; and those that would make mooves at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece for his picture in little. There is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[*Flourish of trumpets.*]

*Guil.* Shall we call the players, my lord ?

*Ham.* Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinour.—Your hands. Come then. The appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony ; but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceiv'd.

*Guil.* In what, my dear lord ?

*Ham.* I am but mad north—north-west : when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a hand-saw.

*Enter Polonius.*

*Pol.* Well be with you, gentlemen !

*Ham.* Hark you, Guildenstern ; and Rosencraus, that great baby, you see there, is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts.

*Ros.* Happily, he's the second time come to them ; for they say an old man is twice a child.

*Ham.* I will prophesy, he comes to tell me of the players. Mark it.—You say right, Sir : on Monday morning ; 'twas then, indeed.

*Pol.* My lord, I have news to tell you.

*Ham.* My lord, I have news to tell you :  
When Roscius was an actor in Rome——

*Pol.* The actors are come hither, my lord.

*Ham.* Buz, buz ! ——

*Pol.* Upon my honour——

*Ham.* *Then came each actor on his af——*

*Pol.* The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical, historical-pastoral, scene undividable, or poem unlimited : Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of wit, and the liberty, these are the only men.

*Ham.* Oh, Jephtha, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou !

*Pol.* What a treasure had he, my lord ?

*Ham.* Why—one fair daughter, and no more,  
The which he loved passing well.

*Pol.* Still on my daughter.

*Ham.* Am I not i' the right, old Jephtha ?

*Pol.* If you call me Jephtha, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

*Ham.* Nay, that follows not.

*Pol.* What follows then, my lord ?

*Ham.* Why, as by lot, God wot—and then you know, it came to pass, as most like it was : the first row of the rubrick will shew you more. For, I ok, where my abridgements comes. [*Enter Players.*] You are welcome, masters ; —— Oh ! old friend ! why, thy face is valanc'd since I saw thee last : com'it thou to beard me in Denmark ? What ! my young lady and mistress ? By By'-r lady, your ladyship is nearer heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chiop-pine. I with your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not crack'd within the ring. —— Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French faul-ooners, fly at any thing we see ; we'll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of your quality ; come, a passionate speech.

1 Play. What speech, my good lord ?

*Ham.* I heard thee speak me a speech once ; but it was never acted ; or if it was, not above once : for the play, I remember, pleas'd not the million ; 'twas caviare to the multitude. One speech in it I chiefly lov'd ; 'twas *Aeneas's* tale to *Dido* ; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of *Priam's* slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line, let me see, let me see — *The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast—* That's not it ;—yet it begins with *Pyrrhus*.

*The rugged Pyrrhus, he, whose sable arms,  
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble  
Old grandfire Priam seeks:—* So proceed you.

*Pol.* My lord, well spoken ; with good accent, and good discretion.

1 Play. Anon he finds him,

*Striking, too short, at Greeks : his antique sword,  
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,  
Repugnant to command : unequal match'd,  
Pyrrhus at Priam drives ; in rage strikes wide ;  
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword,  
The unnerv'd father falls.*

*But, as we often see, against some storm,  
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,  
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below  
As hush as death ; anon the dreadful thunder  
Doth rend the region : so after Pyrrhus' pause, }  
A roused vengeance sets him new a-work ;  
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall  
On Mars his armour, forg'd for proof eternal,  
With less remorse than : Pyrrhus bleeding sword  
Now falls on Priam.—*

*Out, out, thou strumpet Fortune !*

*Pol.* This is too long.

*Ham.* It shall to the barber's with your beard.

*Pr'ythee, say on ; he's for a jig, or a tale of bawdry,  
or he sleeps. Say on ; come to Hecuba.*

1 Play. But who, alas ! who had seen the mobled queen—

*Ham.* The mobled queen ?

*Pol.* That's good.

1 Play. Run bare-foot up and down, threatening the flames  
A clout upon that head,  
Where late the diadem stood ; and for a robe  
A blanket in the alarm of fear caught up ;

*W'bo this had seen, with tongue in venom sleep'd,  
'Gainst fortune's fate would treason have pronounc'd.*

*Pol.* Look, wher he has not turn'd his colour, and has tears in's eyes. Pr'ythee, no more.

*Ham.* 'Tis well. I'll have thee speak out the rest of this soon. Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? Do ye hear, let them be well used; for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time. After your death, you were better have a bad epitaph, than their ill report while you lived.

*Pol.* My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

*Ham.* Much better. Use every man according to his desert, and who shall 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity. The less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

*Pol.* Come, Sirs.

[*Exit Polonius.*]

*Ham.* Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play tomorrow.—Dost thou hear me, old friend—My good friends, [*to Ros. and Guild.*] I'll leave you 'till night. You are welcome to Elsinour.

*Ros.* Farewel, my lord. [*Exeunt Ros. and Guild.*]

*Ham.* Can you play the murder of Gonzago?

*Play.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* We'll ha't to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down, and insert in't? could you not?

*Play.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* Very well. Follow that lord; and, look you mock him not.

[*Exit.*]

Oh, what a wretch and peasant slave am I!

Is it not monstrous that this player here,

But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,

Could force his soul so to his own conceit,

That, from her working, all his visage warm'd;

Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,

A broken voice, and his whole function suiting,

With forms, to his conceit? and all for nothing?

For Hecuba!

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,

Thus he should weep for her? What would he do,

Had he the motive and the cue for passion,

That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,



Make mad the guilty, and appall the free,  
 Confound the ignorant, and amaze, indeed,  
 The very faculty of ears and eyes.  
 But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall  
 To make oppression bitter ; or, ere this,  
 I should have fatied all the region kites  
 With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy villain !  
 Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain !  
 Why, what an ass am I ? This is most brave,  
 That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,  
 Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,  
 Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,  
 And fall a cursing, like a very drab,  
 A scullion ! Fie upon't ! foh !  
 About my brain ! Hum ! I have heard,  
 That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,  
 Have by the very cunning of the scene  
 Been struck so to the soul, that presently  
 They have proclaim'd their malefactions.  
 For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak  
 With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players  
 Play something like the murder of my father  
 Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks ;  
 I'll tent him to the quick ; if he but blench,  
 I know my course. The spirit, that I have seen,  
 May be the devil ; and the devil hath power  
 To assume a pleasing shape ; yea, and perhaps,  
 Out of my weakness and my melancholy,  
 (As he is very potent with such spirits)  
 Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds  
 More relative than this ; the play's the thing,  
 Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king. [Exit.

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A C T III. S C E N E, *The Palace.*

*Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencraus, and Guildenstern.*

*King.* **A**ND can you by no drift of conference  
 Get from him why he puts on this confusion ?

*Ros.* He does confess he feels himself distracted ;  
 But from what cause he will by no means speak.

*Queen.* Did he receive you well ?

*Ros.* Most civilly.

*Guil.* But with much forcing of his disposition.

*Ros.* Unapt to question ; but, of our demands,  
Most free in his reply.

*Queen.* Did you invite him to any pastime ?

*Ros.* Madam, it so fell out, that certain players  
We o'ertook on the way : of these we told him ;  
And there did seem in him a kind of joy  
To hear of it. They are about the court ;  
And (as I think) they have already order  
This night to play before him.

*Pol.* 'Tis most true :

And he beseech'd me to intreat your majesties  
To hear and see the matter.

*King.* With all my heart ; and it doth much content  
me

To hear him so inclin'd.—

Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,  
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

*Ros.* We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt.*]

*King.* Sweet Gertrude, leave us too.  
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,  
That he, as 'twere by accident, may meet  
Ophelia here.

Her father and myself  
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing and unseen,  
We may of their intercounter judge.

*Queen.* I shall obey you : —

And for my part, Ophelia, I do wish,  
That your good beauties be the happy cause  
Of Hamlet's wildness ; so shall I hope your virtues  
May bring him to his wonted way again  
To both your honours.

*Oph.* Madam, I wish it may.

[*Exit queen.*]

*Pol.* Ophelia, walk you here : If so your majesties  
shall please, retire conceal'd.

*Oph.* I hear him coming ; retire, my lord.

[*Exit all but Ophelia.*]

*Enter Hamlet.*

*Ham.* To be or not to be ? that is the question.—  
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer  
The slings and harrows of outrageous fortune,  
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,  
And, by opposing, end them ?—To die—to sleep—

No more ?—and, by a sleep, to say we end  
 The heart-ach, and the thousand nat'ral shocks  
 That flesh is heir to :—'tis a consummation  
 Devoutly to be wish'd. To die ;—to sleep ;—  
 To sleep ! perchance, to dream :—Ay, there's the rub ;  
 For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,  
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
 Must give us pause. There's the respect,  
 That makes calamity of so long life :  
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,  
 Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's centumely,  
 The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,  
 The insolence of office, and the spurns  
 That patient merit of th' unworthy takes ;  
 When he himself might his quietus make  
 With a bare bodkin ? Who would fardles bear,  
 To groan and sweat under a weary life,  
 But that the dread of something after death,  
 That undiscover'd country, from whose bourne  
 No traveller returns ; puzzles the will ;  
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have,  
 Than fly to others that we know not of ?  
 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,  
 And thus the healthful face of resolution  
 Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought ;  
 And enterprizes of great pith and moment,  
 With this regard, their currents torn awry,  
 And lose the name of action.—Soft you, now !

[Seeing Ophelia.]

The fair Ophelia ?—Nymph, in thy orisons  
 Be all my sins remember'd.

*Oph.* Good, my lord,

How does your honour for this many a day ?

*Ham.* I humbly thank you ; well.

*Oph.* My lord, I have remembrances of yours,  
 That I have long'd to re-deliver.

I pray you now, receive them.

*Ham.* No, not I ; I never gave you ought.

*Oph.* My honour'd lord, you know right well you did ;  
 And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd,  
 As made the things more rich : that perfume lost,  
 Take these again ; for to the noble mind,

Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkind.

—There, my lord.

*Ham.* Ha, ha! are you honest?

*Oph.* My lord!

*Ham.* Are you fair?

*Oph.* What means your lordship?

*Ham.* That if you be honest and fair, you should admit no discourse to your beauty.

*Oph.* Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

*Ham.* Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is, to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into its likeness. This was some time a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

*Oph.* Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

*Ham.* You should not have believ'd me: for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we shall relish of it. I lov'd you not.

*Oph.* I was the more deceiv'd.

*Ham.* Get thee to a nunnery. Why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my back than I have thoughts to put them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

*Oph.* At home, my lord?

*Ham.* Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool no where but in's own house. Farewel.

*Oph.* Oh, help him, you sweet heavens!

*Ham.* If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry. Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery; farewell: or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery go, and quickly too. Farewel.

*Oph.* Heavenly powers restore him!

*Ham.* I have heard of your paintings, too, well enough. Heaven has given you one face, and you make yourselves another. You jig, you amble, and you lisp,

and nick-name Heaven's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to; I'll no more on't; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages. Those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. *[Exit.]*

*Oph.* Oh, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!  
The expectation and rose of the fair state,  
Th' observ'd of all observers! Quite, quite down!  
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,  
Now see that noble and most sov'reign reason,  
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;  
Oh, woe is me!

To have seen what I have seen; see what I see.

*Enter King and Polonius.*

*King.* Love! his affections do not that way tend;  
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,  
Was not like madness.

He shall with speed to England,  
For the demand of our neglected tribute:  
What think you on't?

*Pol.* It shall do well.

Bur, if you hold it fit, after the play,  
Let his queen-mother all alone entreat him  
To shew his griefs; let her be round with him;  
And I'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear  
Of all their conference. If she find him not,  
To England send him; or confine him where  
Your wisdom best shall think.

*King.* It shall be so.

Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go. *[Exit.]*

SCENE, a Hall.

*Enter Hamlet and two or three of the Players.*

*Ham.* Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue. But if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as leave the town-crier had spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. Oh, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings; who, for the most part, are capable

of nothing but inexplicable dumb shews, and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'er-doing termagant; it out-herods Herod. Pray you, avoid it.

*Play.* I warrant your honour.

*Ham.* Be not too tame, neither; but let your own discretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing; whose end, both at the first, and now, was and is, to hold as 'twere the mirror up to nature; to shew virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure. Now this over-done, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of ~~which~~ <sup>which</sup> one, must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. Oh, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly (not to speak it profanely) that neither having the accent of Christian, nor the gait of Christian, Pagan, or man, have so strutted and bellow'd, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well; they imitated humanity so abominably.

[with us.

*Play.* I hope we have reform'd that indifferently

*Ham.* Oh, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them: for there be of them, that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the mean time, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered. That's villainous, and shews a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.

*Both.* We will, my lord.

[*Exeunt Players.*

*Ham.* What, ho, Horatio!

*Enter Horatio.*

*Hor.* Here, sweet lord, at your service.

*Ham.* Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man,  
As e'er my conversation cop'd withal.

*Hor.* Oh, my dear lord ———

*Ham.* Nay, do not think I flatter:  
For what advancement may I hope from thee,  
That no revenue hast, but thy good spirits,  
To feed and clothe thee?  
Do st thou hear?

Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,  
 And could of men distinguish, her election  
 Hath seal'd thee for herself: for thou hast been  
 As one, in suff'ring all, that suffers nothing:  
 Give me that man,  
 That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him  
 In my heart's core; ay, in my heart of heart,  
 As I do thee. Something too much of this.—  
 There is a play to-night before the king,  
 One scene of it comes near the circumstance,  
 Which I have told thee, of my father's death.  
 I pr'ythee, when thou seest that act a-foot,  
 Even with the very comment of thy soul,  
 Observe my uncle; if his occult guilt  
 Do not itself discover in one speech,  
 It is a damned ghost that we have seen.  
 Give him heedful note;  
 For mine eyes will rivet to his face;  
 And, after, we will both our judgments join  
 In censure of his seeming.

*Hor.* I will, my lord.

*Ham.* They're coming to the play; I must be idle:  
 get you a place.

*Danish march. A flourish.*

*Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencraus,  
 Guildenstern, and others.*

*King.* How fares our cousin Hamlet?

*Ham.* Excellent, i'faith; of theameleon's dish. I eat  
 the air, promise-cramm'd. You cannot feed capons so.

*King.* I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet;  
 these words are not mine.

*Ham.* No, nor mine now, my lord.—You play'd once  
 i'the university, you say? [*To Polonius.*]

*Pol.* That did I, my lord, and was accounted a good  
 actor.

*Ham.* And what did you enact?

*Pol.* I did enact Julius Cæsar: I was kill'd i'the ca-  
 pitol; Brutus kill'd me.

*Ham.* It was a brute part of him, to kill so capital a  
 calf there.—Be the players ready?

*Ros.* Ay, my lord, they stay upon your patience.

*Queen.* Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

*Ham.* No, good mother, here's mettle more attractive.

*Pol.* Oh ho! do you mark that?

*Ham.* Lady, shall I lie in your lap ?

[*Lying down at Ophelia's feet.*]

*Oph.* You are merry, my lord.

*Ham.* Your only jig-maker. What should a man do, but be merry ? For, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

*Oph.* Nay, 'tis ~~twice~~ two months, my lord.

*Ham.* So long ? Nay, then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of fables. Oh, heavens ! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet ? then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year : but, by'r lady, he must build churches, then ; or else shall he suffer.

*Enter Player King and Queen.*

*Oph.* What means this, my lord ?

*Ham.* Marry, this is miching malicho ; it means mischief. [play ?]

*Oph.* Belike, this shew imports the argument of the

*Enter Prologue.*

*Ham.* We shall know by this fellow : the players cannot keep counsel ; they'll tell all.

*Oph.* Will he tell us what this shew meant ?

*Ham.* Ay, or any shew that you'll shew him. Be not you asham'd to shew, he'll not shame to tell you what it means.

*Oph.* You are naught, you are naught. I'll mark the play.

*Prolog.* For us and for our tragedy,  
Here stooping to your clemency,  
We beg your bearing patiently.

*Ham.* Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring ?

*Oph.* 'Tis brief, my lord.

*Ham.* As woman's love. [round,

*Pl. King.* Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone  
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,  
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

*Pl. Q.* So many journies may the sun and moon  
Make us again count o'er, ere love be done.

But woe is me, you are so sick of late,  
And so far different from your former state,  
That I distrust you ; yet though I distrust,  
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must :  
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know ;



And as my love is great, my fear is so.  
 [Where love is great, the smallest doubts are fear;  
 Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.]

*Pl. K.* I must leave thee, love, and shortly too :  
 My working powers their functions leave to do,  
 And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,  
 Honour'd, belov'd. and, haply, one as kind  
 For husband shalt thou——

*Pl. Q.* Oh, confound the rest !  
 Such love must needs be treason in my breast :  
 In second husband let me be accurst !  
 None wed the second, but who kill the first.

*Ham.* That's wormwood !

*Pl. K.* I do believe you think what now you speak ;  
 But what we do determine, oft' we break ;  
 What to ourselves in passion we propose,  
 The passion ending, doth the purpose lose ;  
 Think still thou wilt no second husband wed ;  
 But die thy thoughts, when thy first lord is dead.

*Pl. Q.* Nor earth to give me food, nor heaven light,  
 Sport and repose, lock from me, day and night !  
 Both here, and hence, pursue me, lasting strife !  
 If, once I widow be, and then a wife.

*Ham.* If she should break it now——

*Pl. K.* 'Tis deeply sworn ; sweet, leave me here a  
 while ;  
 My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile  
 The tedious day with sleep. [Sleeps.]

*Pl. Q.* Sleep rock thy brain,  
 And never come mischance between us twain ! [Exit.]

*Ham.* Madam, how like you this play ?

*Queen.* The lady protests too much, methinks.

*Ham.* Oh, but she'll keep her word.

*King.* Have you heard the argument ? is there no offence in't ?

*Ham.* No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest. No offence in't the world.

*King.* What do you call the play ?

*Ham.* *The Mouse-Trap.* Marry, how ? tropically.—  
 This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna :  
 Gonzago is the king's name, his wife's Baptista : you  
 shall see anon. 'tis a knavish piece of work ; but what  
 o'that ? your Majesty, and we that have free souls,

it touches us not : let the gall'd jade wince, our withers are unwrung.

*Enter Lucianus.*

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

*Oph.* You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

*Ham.* I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

Begin, murderer.—Leave thy damnable faces, and begin.

Come—the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.

*Luc.* Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing,

Confederate season, and no creature seeing,

Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,

With Hecat's banethrice blasted, thrice infected,

Thy natural magic, and dire property,

On wholesome life usurps immediately.

*[Pours the poison into his ears.]*

*Ham.* He poisons him in the garden for's estate. His name's Gonzago ; the story is extant, and written in very choice Italian. You shall see anon, how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

*King.* Give me some light :—Away !

*All.* Lights, lights, lights !

*[Exit all but Hamlet and Horatio.]*

*Ham.* Why, let the stricken deer go weep,

The heart ungalled play ;

For some must watch, whilst some must sleep ;

So runs the world away.

Oh, good Horatio ! I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pounds. Did'st perceive ?

*Hor.* Very well, my lord.

*Ham.* Upon the talk of the poisoning ?

*Hor.* I did very well note him.

*Ham.* Come, some music. Come, the recorders.

*[Exit Horatio.]*

*Enter Rosencraus and Guildenstern.*

*Guil.* Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

*Ham.* Sir, a whole history.

*Guil.* The king, Sir—

*Ham.* Ay, Sir, what of him ?

*Guil.* Is, in his retirement, marvellous distemper'd—

*Ham.* With drink, Sir ?

*Guil.* No, my lord, with choler.

*Ham.* Your wisdom should shew itself more richer, to signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation, would, perhaps, plunge him into more choler.

*Guil.* Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

*Ham.* I am tame, Sir.—Pronounce.

*Guil.* The queen your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

*Ham.* You are welcome.

*Guil.* Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment; if not, your pardon, and my return, shall be the end of my business.

*Ham.* Sir, I cannot.

*Guil.* What, my lord?

*Ham.* Make you a wholesome answer: my wit's diseased. But, Sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother. Therefore no more, but to the matter.—My mother, you say——

*Ros.* Then thus she says. Your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

*Ham.* Oh wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.

*Ros.* She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

*Ham.* We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

*Ros.* My lord, you once did love me.

*Ham.* So I do still, by these pickers and stealers.

*Ros.* Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? You do, surely, bar the door of your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

*Ham.* Sir, I lack advancement.

*Ros.* How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

*Ham.* Ay, but *while the grass grows*—the proverb is something musty.

*Enter Horatio with a recorder.*

Why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

*Guil.* Oh, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

*Ham.* I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

*Guil.* My lord, I cannot.

*Ham.* I pray you.

*Guil.* Believe me, I cannot.

*Ham.* I do beseech you.

*Guil.* I know no touch of it, my lord.

*Ham.* 'Tis as easy as lying. Govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music.—Look you, these are the stops.

*Guil.* But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

*Ham.* Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make me? you would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops: you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak. S'death, do you think that I am easier to be play'd on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.—

*Enter Polonius.*

*Pol.* My lord, the queen would speak with you.

*Ham.* Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel?

*Pol.* 'Tis like a camel, indeed.

*Ham.* Methinks it is like a ~~camel~~ *an ouzel*

*Pol.* It is back'd like a ~~camel~~ *an ouzel*

*Ham.* Or, like a whale.

*Pol.* Very like a whale.

*Ham.* Then will I come to my mother by and by—they fool me to the top of my bent.—I will come by and by.

*Pol.* I will say so.

*Ham.* Leave me, friends.

[*Exeunt.*]

'Tis now the very witching time of night,  
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out  
Contagion to this world. Now could I drink hot blood,  
And do such deeds as day itself  
Would quake to look on, Soft, now to my mother—

O heart, lose not thy nature ; let not ever  
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom :  
Let me be cruel, but not unnatural :  
I will speak daggers to her, but use none.

SCENE, a Room in the Palace.

*Enter King, Rosenkrantz, and Guildenstern.*

*King.* I like him not ; nor stands it safe with us  
To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare you ;  
For we will fetters put upon this fear,  
Which now grows too free-footed. *Go*

*Both.* We will haste us. *[Exit Gentlemen.]*

*Enter Polonius.*

*Pol.* My lord, he's going to his mother's closet ;  
Behind the arras I'll convey myself  
To hear the process. I'll warrant she'll tax him home :  
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,  
'Tis meet, that some more audience than a mother,  
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear  
The speech. Fare you well, my liege ; *of vantage*  
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,  
And tell you what I know. *[Exit.]*

*King.* Thanks, dear my lord.

Oh ! my offence is rank ; it smells to heaven ;  
It hath the primal, eldest curse upon't ;  
A brother's murder !—Pray I cannot,  
Though inclination be as sharp as will ;  
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent ;  
And, like a man to double business bound,  
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,  
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand  
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood ;  
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens  
To wash it white as snow ? Whereto serves mercy,  
But to confront the visage of offence ?  
And what's in prayer, but this two-fold force,  
To be fore-stalled ere we come to fall,  
Or pardon'd being down ? Then I'll look up ;  
My fault is past. But oh, what form of prayer  
Can serve my turn ? Forgive me my foul murder !—  
That cannot be, since I am still possess'd  
Of those effects for which I did the murder,  
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.  
May one be pardon'd, and retain the offence ?

In the corrupted currents of this world,  
 Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice;  
 And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself  
 Buys out the law: but 'tis not so above:  
 There is no shuffling; there the action lies  
 In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,  
 Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,  
 To give in evidence. What then? what rests?  
 Try, what repentance can: what can it not?  
 Yet what can it, when one cannot repent?  
 Oh wretched state! oh bosom, black as death!  
 Oh limed soul; that, struggling to be free,  
 Art more engag'd! Help, angels! make assay!  
 Bow, stubborn knees; and heart, with strings of steel,  
 Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!  
 All may be well. [Exit.

SCENE, the Queen's Closet.

*Enter Queen and Polonius.*

*Pol.* He will come straight. Look, you lay home to him:

Tell him, his pranks have been too broad to bear with;  
 And that your grace hath screen'd, and stood between  
 Much heat and him. I'll ~~glance~~ *glance* me e'en here: *Scence*  
 Pray you, be round with him.

*Queen.* Withdraw, I hear him coming.

*[Polonius hides himself.]*

*Enter Hamlet.*

*Ham.* Now, mother; what's the matter?

*Queen.* Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

*Ham.* Mother, you have my father much offended.

*Queen.* Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

*Ham.* Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

*Queen.* Why, how now, Hamlet?

*Ham.* What's the matter now?

*Queen.* Have you forgot me?

*Ham.* No, by the rood, not so:

You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife.

And, 'would it were not so!—you are my mother.

*Queen.* Nay, then I'll set those to you that can speak.

*Ham.* Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge.

You go not, 'till I set you up a glass  
 Where you may see the inmost part of you.

*Queen.* What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me!

Help, help, ho!

*Pol.* What, ho! help! [*Behind.*

*Ham.* How now, a rat? Dead, for a ducat, dead.

[*Hamlet strikes at Polonius through the arras.*]

*Pol.* Oh, I am slain.

*Queen.* Oh me, what hast thou done?

*Ham.* Nay, I know not: is it the king?

*Queen.* Oh, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

*Ham.* A bloody deed; almost as bad, good mother,  
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

*Queen.* As kill a king?

*Ham.* Ay, lady, 'twas my word. ———

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

[*When he sees it is Polonius.*]

I took thee for thy better; take thy fortune:

Thou find'st, to be too busy, is some danger. ———

Leave wringing of your hands: peace, sit you down,

And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,

If it be made of penetrable stuff;

If damned custom have not braz'd it so,

That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

*Queen.* What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy  
tongue

In noise so rude against me?

*Ham.* Such an act,

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;

Calis virtue, hypocrite; takes off the rose

From the fair forehead of an innocent love,

And sets a blister there;<sup>cd</sup> makes marriage vows

As false as dicers oaths; Oh, such a deed,

As from the body of contraction plucks

The very soul: and sweet religion makes

A rhapsody of words. Ah me, that act!

*Queen.* Ah me! what act,

That roars so loud, and thunders ~~in the index~~ *to the Indies*?

*Ham.* Look here upon this picture, and on this:

The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.

See, what a grace was seated on this brow:

Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;

An eye like Mars, to threaten or command;

A station, like the herald Mercury

New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill ;  
 A combination, and a ferm, indeed,  
 Where every god did seem to set his seal,  
 To give the world assurance of a man :  
 This *was* your husband.—Look you now, what fol-  
 lows ;

Here *is* your husband ; like a mildew'd ear  
 Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes ?  
 Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,  
 And batten on this moor ? Ha, have you eyes ?  
 You cannot call it love ; for, at your age,  
 'The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,  
 And waits upon the judgment ; and what judgment  
 Would step from this to this ?

O shame ! where is thy blush ? Rebellious hell,  
 If thou canst mutiny in a matron's bones,  
 To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,  
 And melt in her own fire.

*Queen.* O Hamlet ! speak no more ;  
 Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul.

*Ham.* Nay, but to live  
 In the rank sweat of an incestuous bed—

*Queen.* No more, sweet Hamlet.

*Ham.* A murderer, and a villain !—  
 A slave, that is not twentieth part the tythe  
 Of your precedent lord !—a vice of kings !—  
 A cutpurse of the empire and the rule ;  
 That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,  
 And put it in his pocket !

*King of Shredolpatches* Enter Ghost

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,

[*Starting up.*

You heav'nly guards !—What would your gracious  
 figure ?

*Queen.* Alas, he's mad.

*Ham.* Do you not come your tardy son to chide,  
 That laps'd in time and passion, lets go by  
 Th' important acting of your dread command ?  
 O, say !

*Ghost.* Do not forget : this visitation  
 Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.  
 But, look ! amazement on thy mother sits ;  
 O, step between her and her fighting soul ;



Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works.—

Speak to her, Hamlet.

*Ham.* How is't with you, lady?

*Queen.* Alas! how is't with you;

That thus you bend your eye on vacancy,  
And with th' incorp'ral air do hold discourse?

Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep,

And, as the sleeping soldiers in th' alarm,

Your bedded hair,

Starts up, and stands on end. O gentle son,

Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper

Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

*Ham.* On him! on him!—Look you, how pale he glares!

His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,

Would make them capable.—Do not look on me;

Lest with this piteous action you convert

My stern effects: then what I have to do

Will want true colour; tears, perchance, for blood.

*Queen.* To whom do you speak this?

*Ham.* Do you see nothing there?

*Queen.* Nothing at all; yet all, that is, I see.

*Ham.* Nor did you nothing hear?

*Queen.* No, nothing, but ourselves.

*Ham.* Why, look you there! Look how it steals away!

My father, in his habit as he liv'd!

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!

[*Exit Ghost.*]

*Queen.* This is the very coinage of your brain:

This bodiless creation, ecstasy

Is very cunning in.

*Ham.* Ecstasy!

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,

And makes as healthful music. It is not madness

That I have uttered: bring me to the test,

And I the matter will re-word; which madness

Cannot do. Mother, for love of grace,

Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,

That not your trespass, but my madness, speaks:

It will but skin and film the ulcerous place;

Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,

Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;

Repent what's past, avoid what is to come.

*Queen.* Oh Hamlet! thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

*Ham.* O, throw away the worser part of it,  
And live the purer with the other half.

Good night; but go not to mine uncle's bed;  
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.

Once more, good night!

And when you are desirous to be blest,  
I'll blessing beg of you.—For this same lord,

*[Pointing to Polonius.]*

I do repent: but heaven hath pleas'd it so,

To punish this with me, and me with this,

That I must be their scourge and minister.

I will bestow him, and will answer well

The death I gave him. So again, good night!

I must be cruel, only to be kind;

Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.—

*[Exit the Queen and Hamlet.]*

ACT. IV. SCENE, *a royal Apartment.*

*Enter King and Queen.*

*King.* **T**HERE's matter in these sighs; you must  
expound them.

How does Hamlet?

*Queen.* Mad as the seas and wind, when both contend  
Which is the mightier. In his lawless fit,  
Behind the arras hearing something stir,  
He whips his rapier out, and cries, a rat! a rat!  
And, in this brainish apprehension, kills  
The unseen good old man.

*King.* O heavy deed!

It had been so with us, had we been there.

Where is he gone?

*Queen.* To draw apart the body he hath kill'd.

*King.* O, Gertrude, come away!

The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,  
But we will ship him hence: and this vile deed  
We must, with all our majesty and skill,  
Both countenance and excuse.—Ho! Guildenstern!

*Enter Rosencraus and Guildenstern.*

Friends both, go join you with some further aid.

Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,

And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him.

Go seek him out ; speak fair, and bring the body  
Into the chapel. Pray you, haste in this.

[*Exeunt Ros. and Guild.*]

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends,  
And let them know both what we mean to do,  
And what's untimely done.

S C E N E, *another Room,*

*Enter Hamlet.*

*Ham.* Safely flow'd——But, soft——

*Ros. &c. within.* Hamlet ! Lord Hamlet !

*Ham.* What noise ? who calls on Hamlet ?

Oh, here they come.

*Enter Rosencraus and Guildenstern.*

*Ros.* What have you done, my lord, with the dead  
body ?

*Ham.* Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

*Ros.* Tell us where 'tis ; that we may take it thence,  
And bear it to the chapel.

*Ham.* Do not believe it.

*Ros.* Believe what ?

*Ham.* That I can keep your counsel, and not mine  
own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge ! what re-  
plication should be made by the son of a king ?

*Ros.* Take you me for a sponge, my lord ?

*Ham.* Ay, Sir, that soaks up the king's countenance,  
his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the  
king best service in the end : he keeps them, like an  
apple, in the corner of his jaw ; first mouth'd to be  
last swallow'd. When he needs what you have glean'd,  
it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry  
again.

*Ros.* I understand you not, my lord.

*Ham.* I am glad of it : a knavish speech sleeps in a  
foolish ear.

*Ros.* My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and  
go with us to the king.

*Ham.* The body is with the king, but the king is not  
with the body. The king is a thing——

*Guil.* A thing, my lord ?

*Ham.* Bring me to him. *of nothing* [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E, *another Room.*

*Enter King.*

*King.* How dangerous is it, that this man goes loose ?  
It must not we put the strong law on him :

He's lov'd of the distracted multitude,  
 Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes :  
 And where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,  
 But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,  
 This sudden sending him away must seem  
 Deliberate pause. Diseases, desperate grown,  
 By desperate appliance are reliev'd,  
 Or not at all. How now ? what hath befallen ?

*Enter Rosencraus.*

*Ros.* Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord, we cannot get from him.

*King.* But where is he ?

*Ros.* Without, my lord ; guarded, to know your pleasure.

*King.* Bring him before us.

*Ros.* Ho ! Guildenstern ! bring in my lord.

*Enter Hamlet and Guildenstern.*

*King.* Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius ?

*Ham.* At supper.

*King.* At supper ? where ?

*Ham.* Not where he eats, but where he is eaten : a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him.

*King.* Where is Polonius ?

*Ham.* In heaven ; send thither to see, If your messenger find him not there, seek him y' the other place yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

*King.* Go seek him there.

*Ham.* He will stay 'till you come.

*King.* Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety, Therefore prepare thyself ;  
 The bark is ready, and the wind fits fair,  
 For England ?

*Ham.* For England ?

*King.* Ay, Hamlet.

*Ham.* Good ;

*King.* So ~~is it~~ if thou knew'st our purposes.

*Ham.* I see a cherub, that sees them.—But come.  
 For England !—Farewel, dear mother.

*King.* Thy loving father, Hamlet.

*Ham.* My mother.—Father and mother is man and wife ; man and wife is one flesh, and so farewel, my mother. Come. For England.

*King.* Follow him ; tempt him with speed abroad ;  
Away ! for every thing is seal'd and done.

[*Exeunt Ros. and Guild,*

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,  
Let it be testified in Hamlet's death. [*Exit.*

SCENE, *Elfinour. A Room in the Palace.*

*Enter Queen, Horatio, and a Gentleman.*

*Queen.* I will not speak with her.

*Hor.* 'Twere good she were spoken with ; for she may  
throw

Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

*Queen.* Let her come in. [*Exit Gent.*

*Enter Ophelia.*

*Oph.* How should I your true love know  
From another one ?

*By his cockle hat and staff,  
And by his sandal shoe.* [*Singing.*

*Queen.* Alas, sweet lady ; what imports this song ?

*Oph.* Say you ? Nay, pray you, mark.

*He is dead and gone, lady,  
He is dead and gone ;  
At his head a green-grass turf,  
At his heels a stone.*

*Enter King.*

*Queen.* Nay, but, Ophelia ———

*Oph.* Pray you, mark.

*White his shroud as the mountain snow,  
Larded all with sweet flowers ;  
Which bewept to the grave did go,  
With true love showers.*

*King.* How do you, pretty lady ?

*Oph.* Well, God 'ield you ! They say, the owl was a  
baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but  
we know not what we may be.

*King.* Conceit upon her father.

*Oph.* Pray, let us have no words of this ; but when  
they ask you what it means, say you this :

*To-morrow is St. Valentine's day,  
All in the morn betime,  
And I a maid at your window,  
To be your Valentine.*

*King.* Pretty Ophelia !

*O. b.* Indeed, without an oath, I'll make an end on't:

*Tbin up be rose, and don'd his cloaths,  
And op'd his chamber door;  
Let in the maid, that out a maid  
Never departed more.*

*King.* How long has she been thus?

*Opb.* I hope all will be well. We must be patient:  
but I cannot chuse but weep, to think, they should lay  
him i' the cold ground: my brother shall know of it,  
and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come my  
coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies;  
good night, good night. *[Exit.*

*King.* Follow her close; give her good watch, I pay  
you. *[Exit Horatio.*

Oh! this is the poison of deep grief; it springs  
All from her father's death.

*[A noise within.*

*Enter a Gentleman.*

*King.* What is the matter?

*Gen.* Save yourself, my lord!

Young Laertes, in a riotous head,  
O'er-bears your officers: The rabble call him lord:  
They cry, Chuse we Laertes for our king!  
Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds;  
Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!

*[A noise within.*

*La. r. (within)* Where is the king?—Sirs, stand you  
all without;

*Enter Laertes.*

*Laer.* O, thou vile king,  
Give me my father.

*Queen.* Calmly, good Laertes.

*Laer.* That drop of blood that's calm, proclaims me  
bastard;  
Cries cuckold to my father; brands the harlot  
Ev'n here, between the chaste unsmirched brow  
Of my true mother.

*King.* What is the cause, Laertes,  
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?  
—Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person;  
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,  
That treason can but peep to what it would.

*Laer.* Where is my father?

*King.* Dead.

*Queen.* But not by him.

*King.* Let him demand his fill.

*Laer.* How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with:  
To hell, allegiance! vows to the blackest devil!

To this point I stand,

That both the worlds I give to negligence,  
Let come, what comes; only I'll be reveng'd  
Most thoroughly for my father.

*King.* Who shall stay you?

*Laer.* My will; not all the world's:  
And for my means, I'll husband them so well,  
They shall go far with little.

*King.* Will you in revenge of your  
Dear father's death,  
Destroy both friend and foe?

*Laer.* None but his enemies.

*King.* Will you know them, then?

*Laer.* To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms,  
And, like the kind life-rending pelican,  
Relieve them with my blood.

*King.* Why, now you speak  
Like a true gentleman.  
That I am guiltless of your father's death,  
And am most sensible in grief for it,  
It shall as level to your judgment lie,  
As day does to your eye.

(*Within.*) Oh, poor, Ophelia! let her come in.

*Laer.* How now! what noise is that?

*Enter Ophelia, fantastically dressed with straws and flowers.*

O rose of May! dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!  
O heav'n's! is't possible a young maid's wits  
Should be as mortal as a sick man's life?

*Oph.* They bore him barefaced on the bier,  
And on his grave rain'd many a tear.

*Laer.* Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,  
It could not move thus.

*Oph.* You must sing, down-a-down, as you call him, a-  
down-a.

O how the wheel becomes it! it is the false steward  
that stole his master's daughter.

*Laer.* This nothing's more than matter.

*Oph.* There's rosemary, that's for remembrance.  
Pray you, love, remember. And there's pansies, that's  
for thoughts.

*Laer.* A document in madness ; thoughts and remembrance fitted.

*Opb.* There's fennel for you, and columbines : there's rue for you, and here's some for me :—we may call it herb of grace o' Sundays. You may wear your rue with a difference. There's a daisy :—I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father died.—They say, he made a good end——

*For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy——*

*Laer.* Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself, she turns to favour, and to prettiness.

*Oph.* *And will he not come again ?*

*And will he not come again ?*

*No, no, he is dead,*

*Go to thy death-bed,*

*He never will come again.*

*His beard was white as snow,*

*All flaxen was his poll :*

*He is gone, he is gone,*

*And we cast away moan,*

*And peace be with his soul, and with all lovers' souls.* [Exit.

*King.* Laertes, I must share in your grief,  
Or you deny me right. Go but a-part.

Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,

And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me.

If by direct or by collat'ral hand

They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,

Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,

To you in satisfaction :—but if not,

Be you content to lend your patience to us,

And we shall jointly labour with your soul,

To give it due content.

*Laer.* Let this be so.

His means of death, his obscure funeral,

No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,

No noble right, nor formal ostentation,

Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heav'n to earth,

That I must call't in question.

*King.* So you shall :

And where th' offence is, let the great axe fall.

I pray you go with me.

[Exit.

S C E N E, *another Room.*

*Enter Horatio, with a Gentleman.*

[*Hor.* What are they that would speak with me ?



*Genl.* Sailors, Sir. They say, they have letters for you.

*Hor.* Let them come in.

I do not know from what part of the world  
I should be greeted, if not from lord Hamlet.

*Enter two Sailors.*

1 *Sail.* Save you, Sir.

2 *Sail.* Here are letters for you, Sir; if your name be  
Horatio, as we are inform'd it is.

*Horatio reads the letter.*

*HORATIO,* when thou shalt have overlook'd this, give  
these fellows some means to the king: they have letters for  
him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very  
warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too  
slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour, and in the grap-  
ple I boarded them: on the instant they got clear of our ship,  
so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me  
like thieves of mercy; but they knew what they did; I am to  
do a good turn for them. Let the King have the letters I  
have sent; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou  
wouldest fly death. I have words to speak in thy ear will  
make thee dumb; yet they are much too light for the bore of  
the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am.  
Rosencrans and Guildenstern hold their course for England.  
Of them I have much to tell thee. Farewel.

*He that thou knowest thine, Hamlet.*

Come, I will make you way for these your letters;  
And do't the speedier, that you may direct me  
To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*]

*Enter King and Laertes.*

*King.* Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,  
And you must put me in your heart for friend;  
Since you have heard, and with a knowing ear,  
That he, which hath your noble father slain,  
Pursu'd my life.

*Laer.* It well appears.—But tell me,  
Why you proceeded not against these crimes,  
So capital in nature?

*King.* O, for two special reasons;  
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unfinew'd,  
And yet to me are strong. The queen, his mother,  
Lives almost by his looks:  
The other motive,  
Why to a public count I might not go,

Is, the great love the people bear him ;  
 Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,  
 Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,  
 Convert his gyves to graces.

*Laer.* And so have I a noble father lost ;  
 A sister driven into desp'rate terms ;  
 Who has, if praises may go back again,  
 Stood challenger of mount on all the age,  
 For her perfections :—but my revenge will come.

*King.* Break not your sleep for that. You must not think,  
 That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,  
 That we can let our beard be shook with danger,  
 And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more.  
 I lov'd your father, and we love ourself.  
 How now ? what news ?

*Enter a Gentleman.*

*Gent.* Letters, my lord, from Hamlet.  
 These to your majesty :—this to the queen.

*King.* From Hamlet ! Who brought them ?

*Gent.* Sailors, my lord.

*King.* Laertes, you shall hear them :—leave us.

*[Exit Gent.]*

*HIGH and mighty, you shall know, I am set naked on  
 your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your  
 kingly eye. When I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto,  
 recount the occasion of my sudden and most strange return.*

*Hamlet.*

What should this mean ? Are all the rest come back ?  
 Or is it some abuse, and no such thing ?

*Laer.* Know you the hand ?

*King.* 'Tis Hamlet's character. *Nak'd !*  
 And, in a postscript here, he says, *a one ;*  
 Can you advise me ?

*Laer.* I am lost in it, my lord. But let him come ;  
 It warms the very sickness in my heart,  
 That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,  
*Thus diddest thou.*

*King.* If it be so, Laertes,  
 Will you be rul'd by me ?

*Laer.* Ay, my lord ;  
 So you will not o'er-rule me to a peace.

*King.* To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,  
 As giving not his voyage, and that he means  
 To undertake it, I will work him

To an exploit now ripe in my device,  
Under the which he shall not choose but fall ;  
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe ;  
But ev'n his mother shall uncharge the practice,  
And call it accident.

*Laer.* [My lord, I will be rul'd,  
The rather, if you cou'd devise it so,  
That I might be the organ.

*King.* It falls right.  
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,  
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality  
Wherein, they say, you shine.

*Laer.* What part is that, my lord ?

*King.* A very feather in the cap of youth,  
Yet needful too : ]  
Two months since,  
Here was a gentleman of Normandy.—  
He made a confession of you ;  
And gave you such a masterly report,  
For art and exercise in your defence,  
And for your rapier most especial,  
That he cried out, 'Twould be a sight indeed,  
If one could match you. The fencers of their nation,  
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,  
If you oppos'd 'em.—Sir, this report of his,  
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,  
That he could nothing do, but wish and beg  
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.  
Now out of this, ———

*Laer.* What out of this, my lord ?

*King.* Laertes, was your father dear to you ?  
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,  
A face without a heart ?

*Laer.* Why ask you this ?

*King.* Not that I think you did not love your father ;  
But Hamlet comes back ; what would you undertake  
To shew yourself your father's son in deed  
More than in words ?

*Laer.* To cut his throat i' th' church.

*King.* No place, indeed, should murder sanctuify,  
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,  
Will you do this ? Keep close within your chamber :  
Hamlet, return'd, shall know you are come home ;

We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,  
 And set a double varnish on the fame  
 The Frenchman gave you; bring you, in fine, together,  
 And wager on your hands. He being remiss,  
 Most generous, and free from all contriving,  
 Will not peruse the foile; so that with ease,  
 Or with a little shuffling, you may choose  
 A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice,  
 Requite him for your father.

*Laer.* I will do't:

And for the purpose I'll anoint my sword.  
 I bought an unction of a mountebank,  
 So mortal, that but dip a knife in it,  
 Where it draws blood, no cataplasm so rare,  
 Collected from all simples that have virtue,  
 Under the moon, can save the thing from death,  
 That is but scratch'd withal; I'll touch my point  
 With this contagion; that, if I gall him slightly,  
 It may be death.

*King.* Let's farther think of this:

Weigh, what convenience both of time and means  
 May fit us to our shape.—

I ha't:—

When in your motion you are hot and dry,  
 (As make your bouts more violent to that end)  
 And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepar'd him  
 A chalice for the purpose: whereon but sipping,  
 If he by chance escape your venom'd sword,  
 It shall be death.

*Enter Queen.*

*Queen.* One woe doth tread upon another's heel,  
 So fast they follow:—your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

*Laer.* Drown'd! oh, where?

*Queen.* There is a willow grows aslant a brook,  
 That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream:  
 There with fantastic garlands did she come,  
 Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,  
 There on the pendant boughs, here coronet weeds  
 Clambering to hang, an envious siver broke;  
 When down her weedy trophies and herself  
 Fell in the weeping brook!

*Laer.* Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,  
 And therefore I forbid my tears. But yet  
 It is our trick: nature her custom holds,

None

Let shame say what it will. When these are gone,  
The woman will be out.—Adieu, my lord!  
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,  
But that this folly drowns it. [Exit.

King. Follow, Gertrude:  
How much had I to do to calm his rage!  
Now fear I, this will give it start again;  
Therefore let's follow. [Exeunt.

## A C T V. S C E N E, a Church-yard.

Enter two Grave-diggers, with spades, &c.

1 Grave-digger. [S]he to be buried in christian burial, that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

2 Gr. I tell thee, she is; therefore, make her grave straight. The crowner hath fate on her, and finds it christian burial.

1 Gr. How can that be, unless she drown'd herself in her own defence?

2 Gr. Way, 'tis found so.

1 Gr. It must be *se offendendo*, it cannot be else. For here lies the point; if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act, and an act hath three branches; it is to act, to do, and to perform. Argal, she drown'd herself wittingly.

2 Gr. Nay, but hear you, goodman Delver.

1 Gr. Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good. If the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes; mark you that: but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself. Argal, he that is not guilty of his own death, shortens not his own life.

2 Gr. But, is this law?

1 Gr. Ay, marry is't, crowner's quest-law.

2 Gr. Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she would have been buried out of christian burial.

1 Gr. Why, there thou say'st it. And the more pity, that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession.

2 Gr. Was he a gentleman?

1 Gr. He was the first that ever bore arms.

" 2 Gr. Why, he had none.

" 1 Gr. What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the scripture? The scripture says, Adam "digg'd; how could he dig without arms?" I'll put another question to thee; if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself——

2 Gr. Go to.

1 Gr. What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 Gr. The gallows maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1 Gr. I like thy wit well, in good faith; the gallows does well; but how does it well? It does well to those that do ill; now thou dost ill, to say the gallows is built stronger than the church; argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again, come.

2 Gr. Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter? ——

1 Gr. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

2 Gr. Marry, now I can tell.

1 Gr. To't.

2 Gr. Mafs. I cannot tell.

*Enter Hamlet and Horatio at a Distance.*

1 Gr. Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating: and, when you are asked this question next, say, a grave-maker.— The houses he makes last 'till doomsday. Go, and fetch me a stoup of liquor. [Exit 2 Gr.

He digs and sings.

*In youth when I did love, did love,*

*Metthought it was very sweet;*

*To contract, oh, the time for, oh, my belowe,*

*Oh, me thought there was nothing so meet.*

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

Ho. Custom hath made it to him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'Tis e'en so. The hand of little employment hath the dantier sense.

1 Grave-digger sings.

*But age, with his stealing steps,*

*Hath claw'd me in his clutch:*

*And hath shipp'd me into the land,*

*As if I had never been such.*

*Ham.* That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once; how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! This might be the pate of a politician, might it not?

*Hor.* It might, my lord.

*Ham.* Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggins with 'em? Mine ache to think on't.

*I Grave-digger sings.*

*A pick-axe and a spade, a spade,*

*For ——— and a shrouding sheet!*

*O, a pit of clay for to be made,*

*For such a guest is meet.*

*Ham.* There's another. Why may not that be the scull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? Why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave's this, firrah?

*I Gr.* Mine, Sir ———

*O, a pit of clay for to be made,*

*For such a guest is meet.*

*Ham.* I think it be thine, indeed, for thou liest in't.

*I Gr.* You lie out on't, Sir; and therefore it is not yours; for my part, I do not lie in't, yet it is mine.

*Ham.* Thou dost lie in't, to be in't, and say, 'tis thine: 'tis for the dead, not for the quick, therefore thou liest.

*I Gr.* 'Tis a quick lie, Sir; 'twill again from me to you.

*Ham.* What man dost thou dig it for?

*I Gr.* For no man, Sir.

*Ham.* What woman, then?

*I Gr.* For none neither.

*Ham.* Who is to be buried in't?

*I Gr.* One that was a woman, Sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

*Ham.* How absolute the knave is! We must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

*I Gr.* Of all the days i' th' year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet o'ercome Fortinbras.

*Ham.* How long is that since?

*I Gr.* Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that,

It was that very day that young Hamlet was born, he that was mad, and sent into England.

*Ham.* Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

*1 Gr.* Why, because he was mad; he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, it's no great matter there.

*Ham.* Why?

*1 Gr.* 'Twill not be seen in him; there the men are as mad as he.

*Ham.* How came he mad?

*1 Gr.* Very strangely, they say.

*Ham.* How strangely?

*1 Gr.* 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

*Ham.* Upon what ground?

*1 Gr.* Why, here in Denmark. I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

*Ham.* How long will a man lie i' th' earth ere he rot?

*1 Gr.* I'faith, if he be not rotten before he die, he will last you some eight year, or nine year: a tanner will last you nine years.

*Ham.* Why he more than another?

*1 Gr.* Why, Sir, his hide is so tann'd with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a fore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a scull, now, has lain in the earth three-and-twenty years.

*Ham.* Whose was it?

*1 Gr.* A whoreson mad fellow's it was. Whose do you think it was?

*Ham.* Nay, I know not.

*1 Gr.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! he pour'd a flaggon of Rhenish on my head once. This same scull, Sir, was Yorick's scull, the king's jester.

*Ham.* This?

*1 Gr.* E'en that.

*Ham.* Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest; of most excellent fancy; he hath borne me on his back a thousand times. Here hung those lips, that I have kiss'd I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table in a roar? not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to



this favour she must come; make her laugh at that.—

P. 'yther, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think Alexander look'd o' this fashion i' the earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? puh!

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not the imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

Hor. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, 'fai h, not a jot: but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it; as thus; Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth to dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperial Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,

Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.

Oh, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,

Should patch a wall t'expel the winter's flaw!

But soft! but soft, awhile—Here comes the king.

*Enter King, Queen, Laertes, the corpse of Ophelia, with Lords and Priests attending.*

The queen and all the court—Who's that they follow,  
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken,  
The corpse they follow, did with desp'rate hand  
Destroy its own life. It was of some estate:  
Stand by a while, and mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes, a very noble youth. Mark—

Laer. What ceremony else?

Priest. Her obsequies have been so far enlarg'd  
As we have warrantry; her death was doubtful,  
And, but that great command o'erflows the order,  
She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd  
For charitable prayers, flints, and pebbles, should be  
thrown on her;

Yet here she is allow'd her virgin ~~grave~~, *chants*  
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home  
Of hell and burial.

Laer. Must there no more be done?

Priest. No more!

We should profane the service of the dead,  
To sing a requiem, and such rest to her  
As to peace-parred souls.

*Laer.* Lay her i' the earth;  
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh  
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,  
A ministring angel shall my sister be,  
When thou liest howling.

*Ham.* What, the fair Ophelia!

*Q.* Sweets to the sweet, farewell! [*Scattering flowers.*]  
I hop'd, thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife;  
I thought, thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,  
And not have strew'd thy grave.

*Laer.* O, treble woe  
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,  
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense  
Depriv'd thee of! Hold off the earth a-while,  
'Till I have caught her once more in my arms.

[*Laertes leaps into the grave.*]

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,  
'Till of this flat a mountain you have made,  
T' o'er-top old Pelion, or the skyish head  
Of blue Olympus.

*Ham.* [*discovering himself*] What is he, whose grief  
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow  
Conjures the wand'ring stars, and makes them stand  
Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I,  
Hamlet the Dane.

[*Hamlet leaps into the grave.*]

*Laer.* Perdition catch thee; [*Grapling with him.*]

*Ham.* Thou pray'st not well.

I pr'ythee, take thy fingers from my throat;—  
For, though I am not splenetic and rash,  
Yet I have in me something dangerous,  
Which let thy wisdom fear. Hold off thy hand.

*King.* Pluck them asunder. [*The attendants part them.*]

*Ham.* Why I will fight with him upon this theme,  
Until my eye-lids will no longer wag.

*Que n.* Oh, my son! what theme?

*Ham.* I lov'd Ophelia; forty thousand brothers  
Could not, with all their quantity of love,  
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

*King.* O, he is mad, Laertes.

*Ham.* Come, shew me what thou'lt do.

Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?

Woo't drink up Efil ? eat a crocodile ?  
 I'll do't. — Dost thou come here to whine ?  
 To outface me with leaping in her grave ?  
 Be buried quick with her ; and so will I :  
 And if thou prate of mountains, let them throw  
 Millions of acres on us ; till our ground,  
 Singeing his pate against the torrid zone,  
 Make Ossa like a wart ! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,  
 I'll rant as well as thou.

*Queen.* This is mere madness :  
 And thus a-while the fit will work on him :  
 Anon, as patient as the female dove,  
 When that her golden complets are disclos'd,  
 His silence will sit drooping.

*Ham.* Hear you, Sir : —  
 What is the reason that you use me thus ?  
 I lov'd you ever : but it is no matter —  
 Let Hercules himself do what he may,  
 The cat will mew, the dog will have his day. [*Exit.*

*K.* I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him. [*Ex. Hor.*  
 Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech, [*To La.*  
 We'll put the matter to the present push —  
 Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.  
 This grave shall have a living monument. [*Exeunt.*

S C E N E, a Hall in the Palace.

*Enter Hamlet and Horatio.*

*Ham.* So much for this, Sir.  
 You do remember all the circumstance ?

*Hor.* Remember it, my lord —  
*Enter Ofriek.*

*Of.* Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

*Ham.* I humbly thank you, Sir. Dost know this water-fly ?

*Hor.* No, my good lord.

*Ham.* Thy state is the more gracious ; for 'tis a vice  
 to know him.

*Of.* Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I  
 should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

*Ham.* I will receive it with all diligence of spirit.  
 Your bonnet to his right use, 'tis for the head.

*Of.* I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

*Ham.* No, believe me, 'tis very cold ; the wind is  
 northerly.

*Of.* It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

*Ham.* But yet, methinks, it is very sultry, and hot for my complexion——

*Of.* Exceedingly, my lord: It is very sultry—as 'twere—I cannot tell how.—My lord, his majesty bid me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head. Sir, this is the matter——

*Ham.* I beseech you, remember——

*[Hamlet moves him to put on his hat.]*

*Of.* Nay, in good faith. For mine ease. In good faith.—[Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society, and great shewing indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry; for you shall find in him the substance of what part a gentleman would see.]

*Ham.* What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

*Of.* Of Laertes?

*Ham.* Of him, Sir.

*Of.* You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is.

*Ham.* I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but to know a man well, were to know himself.

*Of.* I mean, Sir, for his weapon.

*Ham.* What's his weapon?

*Of.* Single rapier. The king, Sir, hath wag'd with him six Barbary horses, against the which he has impawn'd, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so. Three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts; most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

*Ham.* What call you the carriages?

*Of.* The carriages, Sir, are the hangers.

*Ham.* The phrase would be more germane to the matter, if we could carry cannon by our sides; I would it might be hangers till then. But, on: six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal conceited carriages; that's the French bet against the Danish. Why, is this impawn'd, as you call it?

*Of.* The king, Sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits; he hath laid-on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

*Ham.* How, if I answer, no? [trial.

*Os.* I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in

*Ham.* Sir, I walk here in the hall. If it please his majesty, 'tis the breathing time of day with me; let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him, if I can: if not, I'll gain nothing but my shame, and the odd hits.

*Os.* Shall I deliver you so? [ture will.

*Ham.* To this effect, Sir, after what flourish your na-

*Os.* I commend my duty to your lordship. [Exit.

*Hor.* You will loose this wager, my lord.

*Ham.* I do not think so. Since he went into France, I have been in continual practice: I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart. But it is no matter.

*Hor.* Nay, my good lord.

*Ham.* It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving as would, perhaps, trouble a woman.

*Hor.* If your mind dislike any thing, obey it. I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

*Ham.* Not a whit, we defy augury.

*Scene discovers King, Queen, Laertes, and Lords, Osrick, with other Attendants, with foils, &c.*

*K.* Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

*King puts the hand of Laertes into the hand of Hamlet.*

*H.* Give me your pardon, Sir. I have done you wrong. But pardon it, as you are a gentleman.

This presence knows, and you must needs have heard, How I am punish'd with a fore distraction.

What I have done,

That might your nature, honour, and exception Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.

Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil,

Free me so far in your most gen'rous thoughts,

That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,

And hurt my brother.

*Laer.* I am satisfied in nature, Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most To my revenge.

I do receive your offer'd love like love, And will not wrong it.

*Ham.* I embrace it freely,

And will this brother's wager frankly play,  
Give us the foils.

*Laer.* Come, one for me.

*Ham.* I'll be your foil, Laertes; in mine ignorance  
Your skill shall, like a star i' th' darkest night, appear.

*Laer.* You mock me, Sir.

*Ham.* No, on my honour. [Hamlet,

*King.* Give them the foils, young Osrick. Cousin  
You know the wager.

*Ham.* Well, my lord;

Your grace hath laid the odds o' th' weaker side.

*King.* I do not fear it, I have seen you both;  
But since he's better'd, we have therefore odds.

*Laer.* This is too heavy, let me see another.

*Ham.* This likes me well. These foils have all a  
length? [They prepare to play.

*Of.* Ay, my good lord.

*King.* Give me a bowl of wine;

If Hamlet gives the first or second hit,  
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,  
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire!  
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath,  
And in the cup an onyx shall he drop,  
Richer than that which four successive kings  
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups;  
And let the kettle to the trumpets speak,  
The trumpets to the cannoneer without,  
The cannons to the heav'ns, the heav'ns to earth.  
Now the king drinks to Hamlet.—[Flourish.]—Come,  
begin.

And you the judges hear a wary eye.

*Ham.* Come on, Sir.

*Laer.* Come, my lord. [They play.

*Ham.* One.

*Laer.* No.

*Ham.* Judgment.

*Of.* A hit, a very palpable hit.

*Laer.* Well, — again —

*K.* Stay, give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine.  
Here's to thy health. Give him the cup. [Trumpets sound.

*Ham.* I'll play this bout first. Set it by a while. [They play.

Come. Another hit. What say you?

*Laer.* A touch, a touch, I do confess.

*King.* Our son shall win.

*Queen.* The queen salutes thy fortune, Hamlet.

*Ham.* Good Madam—

*King.* Gertrude, do not drink—

*Queen.* I have, my lord :— I pray you pardon me.

*King.* It is, the poisoned cup. It is too late. [*Aside.*

*Ham.* I dare not drink yet, Madam. By and by.

*Laer.* I'll hit him now.

And yet it is almost against my conscience. [*Aside.*

*Ham.* Come, for the third, Laertes. You but dally ;

I pray you, pass with your best violence ;

I am afraid, you make a wanton of me.

*Laer.* Say you so ? come on.

[*Laertes wounds Hamlet, then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes.*

*King.* Part them, they are incens'd. [*The Queen falls.*

*Hor.* How is it, my lord ?

*Of.* How is't, Laertes ?

*Laer.* Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe,  
I'm justly kill'd with mine own treachery. [*Osrick,*

*Ham.* How does the queen ?

*King.* She swoons to see them bleed.

*Queen.* No, no, the drink, the drink—

Oh, my dear Hamlet— The drink, the drink—

I am poisoned— [*The Queen dies.*

*Ham.* O villainy ! ho ! let the door be lock'd :

Treachery ! seek it out—

*Laer.* It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art slain.

No med'cins in the world can do thee good.

In thee there is not half an hour of life ;

The treach'rous instrument is in thy hand,

Unbated and envenom'd. The foul practice

Hath turn'd it self on me. Lo, here I lie,

Never to rise again.— Thy mother's poison'd.

I can no more— The king—the king's to blame.

*Ham.* The point envenom'd too ?

Then, venom, do thy work.

[*Stabs the King.*

Here, thou incestuous, murd'rous, damn'd Dane,

Follow my mother.

[*King dies.*

*Laer.* He is justly serv'd.

It is a poison temper'd by himself.

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet ;

Mine and my father's death come not on thee,  
Nor thine on me ! [Dies.

*Ham.* Heav'n make thee free of it. I follow thee.  
Wretched Queen, farewell !

You that look pale, and tremble at this chance,  
Th' t are but mutes or audience to this act,  
Had I but time (as this fell serjeant death  
Is strict in his arrest) oh, I could tell you——  
But let it be——Horatio, I am dying ;  
Thou liv'st, report me and my cause aright  
To the unsatisfied.

*Hor.* Never believe it,  
I'm more an antique Roman than a Dane.  
Here's yet some liquor left.

*Ham.* As thou'rt a man,  
Give me the cup. Let go ; by heav'n I'll have it.  
Oh, good Horatio, what a wounded name,  
Thing, standing thus unknown, shall live behind me !  
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,  
Absent thee from felicity a-while,  
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,  
To tell my story.

Oh, I die, Horatio :

The potent poison quite o'ergrows my spirit ;  
I cannot live to hear the news from England.  
But I do prophesy, the election lights  
On Fortinbras ; he has my dying voice ;  
So tell him, with th' occurrents, more or less,  
Which have solicited. The rest is silence. [Dies.

*Hor.* Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet  
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest ! [prince,  
Take up the bodies. Such a sight as this  
Becomes the field, but here shews much amiss.

[Exeunt omnes,

T H E E N D,





